

What is claimed is:

1. A medical image management system comprising:

a mobile image data reception device, which is connectable to medical image data storage means installed in a medical facility, having a function of receiving medical image data sets stored in the medical image data storage means from the medical image data storage means and a function of storing the medical image data sets; and

an image data storage apparatus, which is connectable to the mobile image data reception device, having a function of receiving the medical image data sets transmitted from the mobile image data reception device and function of storing the image data sets, wherein

the image data storage apparatus comprises storage period management means for managing a storage period of each of the medical image data sets stored therein.

2. A medical image management system as defined in Claim 1, wherein the mobile image data reception device further has a function of transmitting a reception completion signal to the medical image data storage means at the time of reception completion of the medical image data sets.

3. The mobile image data reception device used in the medical image management system of Claim 1, the mobile image data storage device being connectable to the medical image data storage means installed in the medical facility, and having the function of receiving the medical image data sets stored in the medical

image data storage means and the function of storing the medical image data sets.

4. The image data storage apparatus used in the medical image management system of Claim 1, the image data storage apparatus being connectable to the mobile image data reception device, and having the function of receiving the medical image data sets transmitted from the mobile image data reception device and the function of storing the medical image data sets, and comprising the storage period management means for managing the storage period of each of the medical image data sets that have been stored.

5. A medical image management system comprising medical image data storage means installed in a medical facility for storing medical image data sets and for enabling transmission of the medical image data sets, and an image data storage apparatus for enabling reception of the medical image data sets from the medical image data storage means and for storing the medical image data sets, wherein

the image data storage apparatus comprises storage period management means for managing a storage period of each of the medical image data sets stored therein.

6. A medical image management system as defined in Claim 5, wherein the image data storage apparatus comprises means for regularly measuring a total amount of the medical image data sets stored in the medical image data storage means, for calculating a difference between a capacity of the medical image data storage

means and the total amount of the medical image data sets, and for receiving the medical image data sets from the medical image data storage means when the difference becomes smaller than a predetermined value.

5           7. A medical image management system as defined in Claim 5, wherein the medical image data storage means has a function of transmitting a reception request signal for requesting reception of the medical image data sets stored in the medical image data storage means, and the image data storage apparatus has a function of receiving the reception request signal.

10           8. A medical image management system as defined in Claim 7, the medical image data storage means regularly measuring a total amount of the medical image data sets stored therein and calculating a difference between a capacity of the medical image data storage means and the total amount of the medical image data sets stored in the medical image data storage means, and transmitting the reception request signal to the image data storage apparatus when the difference becomes smaller than a predetermined value.

15           9. A medical image management system as defined in any one of Claims 5 to 8, wherein the image data storage apparatus further has a function of transmitting a storage completion signal to the medical image data storage means at the time of storing the medical image data sets.

20           10. A medical image management system as defined in Claim 1, wherein the image data storage apparatus further comprises

output means for outputting a desired one of the medical image data sets stored therein according to a predetermined output condition input thereto.

11. The medical image data storage means used in the medical image management system defined in Claim 5, the medical image data storage apparatus storing the medical image data sets, and enabling transmission of the medical image data sets to the image data storage apparatus.

12. The image data storage apparatus used in the medical image management system of Claim 5, the image data storage apparatus receiving the medical image data sets from the medical image data storage means and storing the image data sets therein, and comprising storage period management means for managing the storage period of each of the medical image data sets.

13. The image data storage apparatus used in the medical image management system of Claim 5, the image data storage apparatus comprising output means for outputting a desired one of the medical image data sets stored therein according to a predetermined output condition input thereto.

14. A medical image management method comprising the steps of:

storing medical image data sets in storage means installed in a medical facility;

receiving and storing the medical image data sets from the medical image data storage means by using an image data storage apparatus installed outside the medical facility; and

managing a storage period of each of the medical image data sets that have been stored.

15. A computer-readable recording medium storing a program to cause a computer installed in the mobile image data reception device used in the medical image management system of Claim 1 to execute the procedures of:

receiving the medical image data sets stored in the medical image data storage means installed in the medical facility from the medical image data storage means and storing the image data sets; and

transmitting the medical image data sets that have been received and stored to the image data storage apparatus.

16. A computer-readable recording medium storing a program to cause a computer in the image data storage apparatus used in the medical image management system of Claim 5 to execute the procedures of:

receiving the medical image data sets from the medical image data storage means; and

managing the storage period of each of the medical image data sets that have been stored.

17. A computer-readable recording medium storing a program to cause a computer in the image data storage apparatus used in the medical image management system of Claim 6 to execute the procedures of:

regularly measuring the total amount of the medical image data sets stored in the medical image data storage means;

calculating the difference between the capacity of the medical image data storage means and the total amount of the medical image data sets; and

receiving the medical image data sets from the medical image data storage means when the difference becomes smaller than the predetermined value.

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